



#### WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THE APOLLO?

Taken from Cycle World, Apr. 64

A recent letter from the Berliner Motor Corporation informs us that Mr. Joseph Berliner has commissioned Ducati to design, develop and manufacture an all-new, large displacement touring/sports motorcycle. The machine will be called the D/B V4 (for Ducati and Berliner; and the machine's engine) and it is being produced with funds supplied by Berliner, so that company will of course have a world-wide exclusive distributorship. In the US where it is scheduled to be introduced in mid-1965, the D/B V4 will be known as the Apollo, and the price will be approximately \$1500.

Prototypes will be run, in Italy, for a full year before design is finalized. However, most of the basic features have been decided upon, and the bare specifications for the Apollo are exciting, to say the very least.

The Apollo's engine will be a 90-degree (this configuration has perfect primary balance) V-4 mounted in the frame so that the front cylinders lean forward almost horizontally; the rear cylinders are of course, tilted back only a few degrees from the vertical. This arrangement gives a good supply of cooling air to both banks of cylinders.

Bore and stroke dimensions are subject to change before the machine reaches production status, but are tentatively 84.5MM by 56MM. Standard and Sport versions of the 1260cc engine will be offered: the former will have a pair of 24mm TT pattern Dellorto carburetors, 8:1 compression ration and about 80 bhp at 6000 rpm; the Sport engine will have four 32mm TT Dellortos, 10:1 compression ratio an estimated 100 bhp at 7000 rpm. This may seem like a lot of power in both instances, and it is, but in a four-cylinder engine, with its relatively huge valve area, the power is not difficult to get. In fact, the 80bhp engine is being designed as an ultra-reliable, long-distance touring unit, and it is planned that police departments will find it very well suited to their needs. The Sport engine will obviously, offer absolutely staggering performance at some small penalty in low speed tractability. This is not to say that the Apollo Sport will be a racing motorcycle; it will be high speed road machine and will, like the Standard version, be equipped with such civilized accessories as an optional electric starter.

The engine's crankcase doubles as a housing for the 5-speed transmission, and it appears from drawings we were given that

a wet sump lubrication system is employed. In models built for use with a side-car, the transmission will have 4 forward speeds and a reverse.-

This very exciting engine/transmission package is hung (literally) in a frame that owes much to the Norton "Featherbed," and Berliner is quick to admit this. The front forks are also Norton-inspired, and we must confess that this is one bit of copying of which we heartily approve. Norton roadholding is legendary.

The Apollo will have a 61" wheelbase, which is a bit long; but not relative to size of the engine. At present, 16" wheels are specified, but this may be changed before the Apollo reaches production. Indeed, the final product may be quite different in appearance from the artists' rendering. The basic mechanical specifications will be altered very little, but the styling could take a completely different form.

Whatever detail changes are made, the D/B V4 Apollo, when it reaches the public, will almost certainly become The prestige bike. It is certain to be impressive in appearance and performance, and the engine will surely offer the smoothest flow of power to be had in any motorcycle today. We have been promised one of the first production models (ah, let it be the 100 bhp Sport Model!) and it would be impossible to exaggerate the anticipation with which we look forward to this test. ●

Well, we all know that the Apollo never quite made it. I don't know why. Production costs? Design failures? Lack of public favorable response? Who knows?.....Who knows what evil lurks in the hearts of men.....? The Shadow do. The project was not a total loss though. I'd like to think that our favorite of all Dukes, the twins, had their birth from Big Bertha. Gadd! does that sound right?! Well anyway and now as the sun fades in the Italian horizon and where dust settles on Ducati 160 clutch covers, where back orders make up and litter desk tops, where promises and dreams of great tomorrows when the electrics will finally work.... ..yes folks in that Great Ducati Warehouse in Hasbrouck Heights N.J. sits the dream of one Joseph Berliner; gathering dust, unattended, forgotten with some essential parts missing, the D/B V-4 Apollo. ....Somebody please pass me a handkerchief...I can't handle this.....If any of you ever go by the Berliner Warehouse drop by and see the Apollo. Tell it you are a DIOC member. Polish a section of its Ducati engine or operate the clutch lever, gently, so it knows you care. One of these days, maybe I'll organize a commando unit and kidnap it and bring it somewhere and restore it to operating condition....and ride it on Sundays.... and take it to Daytona to meet Cook & Phil and Paul Ritter and....